

# SubScript

The Sunstar Sub Aqua Newsletter  
[www.sunstar.org.uk](http://www.sunstar.org.uk)



### Introduction

Hi! This short newsletter is an interim report between main Subscript issues. The purpose is to give you all a quick update about what's going on in the club at the moment – the UK dive season is about to start, so have a look through the trips list to see what you'd like to get involved with!

- **Toby (temporary editor)**

### Dates for the diary

Have a look through the list – more information is available on the Sunstar website.

Date	Event	Contact
???	Curry Club	Claire Bull
???	Pirates of the Caribbean III – Cinema.	Claire Bull
7/8 Jul	Weybourne Trip	Raj Mistry
21 – 24 Jul	Lundy trip pt 1 (sorry, now full)	Raj Mistry
25 – 28 Jul	Lundy trip pt 2	Raj Mistry

There's more on the club's website, so have a look there for the most up-to-date listings.

We hope that there will be a trip to Swanage in the near future for some open water experience diving – watch your inbox, or the website, for details.

If there's somewhere you want to go or something you want to do with the club, let the committee know – they always welcome new ideas and enthusiasm.

### DIVING OFFICER'S DOINGS!

### Training report

The ODs have finished their pool training. It must seem like a long time ago that you were contemplating the 8-10 weeks at fore street. Doesn't time fly quickly!

The training officer and all the instructors have also been working incredibly hard with the new cohort of Ocean Divers. Following the pool sessions and lectures, there have been an intensive couple of weekends at Stoney Cove – enjoyed by all students, instructors and hangers-on alike. We now have 4 new Ocean Divers who require a few experience dives to complete their training and a few others well on the way.

Sport diver training has also started, with Paul Mann completing some of his training over the same weekends. Get in touch with Paul Beaumont or myself if you'd like to know more about this.

Dive Leader training is also being discussed, so if you're an S.D. champing at the bit to get to the next grade, have a word with me.

### SDCs

3 members (Toby Pratt, Chris Bond and Alan Beaumont) completed the practical rescue management SDC recently at Gildenburgh. Well done to you all, you're all well on the way to the Dive Leader grade.

In addition, the Boat Handling SDC has been complete. Four members have attended this SDC (Toby Pratt, Graham Titley, David Parkinson and Becky Beaumont). I'm sure we'll hear of their exploits in the next issue.

My thanks to Toby and Chris for organising the SDCs. Also to Dave Lock, Chris Nixon, Pete Young and John Cook for getting Calypso ready for the Boat Handling SDC.

### Incident!

Regrettably, I have to report that we had an incident on the Red Sea trip. Tony Field had a burst ear drum. He was well cared for by the dive guide and boat crew. He consulted a doctor on his return to Na'ama Bay and was told that he will not be able to dive for the next 3 months. This also happened on the day that I decided to sit out diving due to sinus problems. It is not possible to say what could have done to avoid this. I know Tony has some views on what he could have done and I'll see if he is willing to share them with you all in the next issue.

### Safe Diving

The diving season is almost upon us and several people are thinking of getting back in the water. I would like to remind everyone that you should be building up to diving slowly as the majority will have been away from UK diving for some time. A few people have asked me if the Red Sea trip counts as building up to diving in the UK. It does but everyone should be aware that Red Sea diving and UK diving are quite different. Although you will have extended your experience by diving in blue water, diving in the UK requires additional equipment and preparation for low visibility as well as colder temperatures, so take it easy.

I would suggest a session in the pool (if you haven't dived for 4-6 months), followed by a trip to Gildenburgh or Stoney to get used to the additional gear, cold and low vis of UK diving. Build up your depth over a few dives and you will be well prepared for upcoming trips.

BSAC have produced some information to help you prepare for diving after a break. Have a look at the following presentation:

[http://www.bsac.org/uploads/documents/Safety\\_First/scubawise.ppt](http://www.bsac.org/uploads/documents/Safety_First/scubawise.ppt)  
[http://www.bsac.org/uploads/documents/Safety\\_First/scubawise.ppt](http://www.bsac.org/uploads/documents/Safety_First/scubawise.ppt)

All of the material for the Safety First programme can be found at this link:

<http://www.bsac.org/page/143/safety-first-programme.htm>

Remember if you are new to diving you have the pool to practice skills, even if you have finished training. Similarly, if you have not been diving for a while - then come down to the pool and practice.

If you can't remember how to perform a skill then feel free to ask any of the instructors. We'd be happy to repeat any skills training in the pool to bring you up to speed.

*~Raj Mistry*

### New clobber

FrancEs is currently custodian of our club-clothing catalogue – there's a bewildering range of great value garments to keep you warm, dry and looking stylish between dives.

You can also get your purchases embroidered with the Sunstar logo by Chris Bond's better half Val – talk to FrancEs in the pub or at the pool.

### Stoney report

5th April 2007 and our first trip to Stoney Cove. Toby and I had a bleary-eyed 6:45am start got us there for about 9:15am (we were viciously ambushed by breakfast on the way up!) Despite our late arrival, we still got to park on the quayside near the steps to the bus stop entry.



The view from the car

It was bloody cold (the early-bird divers were just coming back out of the water and were cheerfully reporting the water temperature as "F-f-f-f-five degrees mate. L-L-L-L-lovely!"), it was somewhat misty as the sun hadn't got into the quarry yet... and the water looked clear but grey/green and not particularly inviting. But we were as excited as a pair of teenagers as this was

## May 2007

our first "solo" trip out on our own as qualified sports divers - not an instructor in sight! It felt kind of good being in complete control and responsible for what we did, when we did it and where we were going. We had three limiting factors - Toby in a semi-dry (brrrrr!), me sucking air too quickly due to the chilliness and effort and we wanted to go no deeper than 30m (+/- a little). Even though I was in a drysuit, I find the reduced mobility makes me work harder and suck more air... I need a better fitting drysuit! We'd already done most of our rough planning in the car on the way up so we used the time to grab a coffee, have a leak and check the site out again. We agreed some additional signals and slates for the cold and depth we were likely to encounter and as I was the Dive Manager for the day I got busy scribbling stuff down for the record. It's amazing, but just doing these few things meant that it was 10:15 by the time we were kitting up!



Chris enjoying his warm up surface swim

1st dive was a loooong surface swim over to the expert area then a descent down to a platform at 5-6m to get settled, then down the wall to the top of the deep hydrobox at around 30m. Having avoided the temptation to have a look inside (30m was our planned max depth) we came back to the wall at around 24m and headed for the intermediate area, looking for the Cessna light aircraft wreck at around 20m. I swam straight past it but Toby spotted it and dragged me back. Had a play around the wreck then reversed course and followed the wall back, gradually coming shallower. When we (read I...) hit 60B we were nicely back at 6m for a safety stop and then up to the surface (via a cocked up mid-water DSMB deploy!) for another loooong surface swim back to the bus stop. Both on 21% so I think we did well to get around 30 mins at that depth and in that

temperature... and the sun had burnt the mist off by the time we got back so we could actually get warm on the surface!

2nd dive was over to the Stanegarth for a good root around under the stern at around 21m. Explored the rudder and prop (got a half decent photo!) and then came onto the bow via the southern side.



Toby over the Stanegarth



A blurry Chris at the helm of the Stanegarth

Did the complete swim through, entering via the hatch under the wheelhouse and out via the stern engine room hatch. Then headed south to the wall following the bottom (via a barely recognisable landrover wreck) and onto the training area, just to one side of the Nautilus. Got some more photos then went and had a swim under the pub before swimming across the quay to the Vanguard.

May 2007



Chris entering the Stanegarth – the top hatches were closed, so it was pitch black. Very cool!



Chris emerging from the stern hatch following our swim-through

Stopped on bottom and did a static DSMB - much better! - Then over to the quay and out of the water. We did about 15 mins of the dive on the 6-7m area in lieu of a deco/extended safety as according to the tables we should have needed a 17 min deco stop! However, according to the computers we still had plenty of time and just needed a 3 min safety, plus we were both on 32%, so I reckon we were well conservative!

We were both cold at the end of the second dive (particularly Toby in his semi -

the min water temps were 5-7 degrees) but by now the sun was out and the car park was getting agreeably warm. So we decided to go for the third dive, even though it was getting late in the day.



Fish who accompanied us for a DSMB launch

We planned to try and find the APC (which has been moved to the east of the Stanegarth at around 21m) by following the instructions of a couple of guys parked next to us. On the swim out to the Stanegarth we agreed that it was actually a little too deep and (mainly) too late in the day, so we elected to play it safe and stick to the top deck of the Stanegarth and then a straight swim back. As we came back around the north side of the wreck our decision was rewarded by finding a 3ft pike resting in the stern deck area!



Pike Attack!

It was quite relaxed and allowed us to get quite close (Toby got pics) before it swam off into the murk. It must have just arrived as if it had been there 5 minutes earlier we would have landed on it during the descent! Back over the side and a swim to the wall, keeping 2-3m off the bottom to stay within our dive plan max depth - and swam into the Wessex helicopter wreck! Only had time for the briefest of looks before coming up the wall and taking a

safety stop in the training area. As it turns out we could have got away with another 10 minutes in the water but we timed it to be out on the quay by the official time of 4.00pm and we were climbing the ladder at 3:50pm...

All told, we had a top day! I splashed out on another cylinder (I now have two x nitrox ready 15Ls and an Air 15L). We got three dives in, a total of around 1 hour 20 mins dive time in the log book, 30m in UK waters in the log book so we're all dived up ready for the season. And we ticked off the Hydrobox, Cessna, Stanegarh, Stanegarh full swimthrough, the Landrover, Nautilus, Pub, Viscount, Wessex and a 3ft pike in one day! Not shoddy:-)

~ **Chris Bond**

### Personality profile

New to subscript is the Personality Profile! Each month, we'll put one of the members under the spotlight to gain an insight into their weird and wonderful worlds!



*Name, grade, club position*

**Raj Mistry, AI, DO**

*How long have you been diving?*

Just over 13 years and I have enjoyed every minute of it :-)

*Where do you work/what do you do?*

I work for BT Global Service. I am responsible for looking at how we do things and making them more efficient. I also manage delivery projects, design small applications, manage business risk and look after business continuity, for example how we keep services running if large parts of the business are affected by major incidents like flu pandemics or bombings, and a whole bunch of other stuff besides.

*Can you recall your first diving experience?*

I have copied my first experience from the committee web site here for those who don't have access to the web.

My first experience of diving was in 1988 in Jamaica. I paid £25 for a PADI dive experience and boy was it one! The briefing was brief - you put this over your eyes, you breath out of this and you use this to go up and down. I knew nothing about equalising pressure and I hadn't even heard of buoyancy control. About ten minutes into my dive I had a mask leak that caused water to go up my nose, that in turn made me cough, which caused me to "spit" my DV out of my mouth and all this action was happening at 10m. The dive guide must have had a fit as she brought me back to the surface sharing air (an octopus was not standard issue on a reg in those days). Fortunately for me I didn't panic. I had just gulped a jug full of seawater before indicating I had lost my mask and DV. Once back on the surface I insisted on getting my £25 worth and went back down. On returning to shore I promised that I would learn to dive properly but it was a few years before I joined this club in 1994 which was then known as the BT Research Sub Aqua club

*When you aren't diving, what do you do to relax?*

I like to walk when it's not raining. I also cycle as much as I can but need to stop at the various pubs to make sure that the beer isn't going off. I also like reading science fiction/fantasy when I can.

*Most memorable moment diving with the club?*

This was with Dave Tonge some while back when I was a sports diver. We had gone out on the club boat (Starfish) to a wreck off Felixstowe. The dive was executed as planned but on returning to the surface a big swell had appeared. It was the first time I'd experienced the "now you see the boat and now you don't" scenario. After we had all been picked up we headed back to Felixstowe but about a mile or 2 from the slipway we had engine trouble. Despite trying to get the main engine going we had no luck and had to resort to the back up, which was such a tiny engine that we only just got forward

motion. The rest of the crew had to take it in turns to row, use fins etc. It was a long way to row and my arms ached for a week! But at least we got home under our own steam.

*Describe your ideal dive holiday*

Somewhere I could dive on a wreck in good visibility (not necessarily abroad). Where things were done for me so I could focus purely on the diving - a liveboard, preferably, as this would put me at the dive site so I could maximise my time underwater.

*What is your favourite sandwich filling?*

Tuna! What else?

*What do you like most about Sunstar?*

The members who put so much of their time into making this an enjoyable hobby.

**Thank you Raj! Watch out for next month's victim!**

**Practical Rescue Management SDC**

Earlier on this year, Chris Bond, Alan Beaumont and I went off to Guildenburgh for the PRM SDC. This course is a one-day mixed theory and practical session. It goes a long way towards the completion of Dive Leader grade. There is no formal assessment, so is an easy way to tick a few boxes in the logbook.

Once we'd arrived on site, had a coffee and settled down, we were introduced to all the instructors and fellow students, all from the eastern region. We then had a series of short lectures, all designed to highlight the theory of rescue management. These were informative, and particularly interesting were the anecdotal sections where the various instructors recounted incidents they'd been involved in first hand: buddy separation; helicopter rescue etc.

After the lectures, there was a brief period of group discussion where we were placed in the role of rescue manager in various hypothetical situations – it was quite interesting trying to work out priorities and attempting to cover every base in these situations. The central message of all this

theory seemed to be 'learn how to delegate effectively'. A good rescue manager needs to be able to detach him/herself from the incident and provide clear leadership to the available party.

Just before lunch, there was a brief opportunity for those of us who hadn't been instructed in the use of O2 to gain some familiarity with the kit before we went outside to learn how to throw ropes – not as easy as it sounds.

The afternoon was based in and around the water – we were split into small groups and took it in turns to be rescue manager in some role-play exercises. Our assigned instructors had great fun dreaming up strange new scenarios for us to try and manage. Each member of the team was given a role and briefed as to how to behave. This did get quite confusing – particularly when instructors swapped during a scenario from being experienced divers buddying a casualty, to reporters from the local press, to handy casual observers. The whole exercise seemed designed to confuse. I guess this is as realistic as rescue management practicals can get, but at times it did seem somewhat contrived.

Following our patchy attempts to rescue various casualties, we were shown some of the ways of hauling people aboard boats using ropes. Interesting, though difficult, particularly with some heavy swell in the North Sea, I imagine.

All in all, the day was a valuable experience – I don't suppose any of us know exactly how we'll behave in an actual incident until it happens – which I'm sure we all hope it never does. What was most interesting for me was getting a bit of an insight into the stress and strain placed on our senior members whenever we go on a trip. It will definitely make me more aware about what I can do as an individual to make things safer for the group as a whole.

~Toby

**That's all folks! If you've got a story to tell or some information to share, send it in for next month's thrill packed SubScript!**